

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 SAM-01 SAB-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
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INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
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AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
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TEHRAN PASS KHORRAMSHAHR

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, SA

SUBJECT: KING FAISAL CONCLUDES VISIT TO SYRIA

REF: A. DAMASCUS 167; B. DAMASCUS 189

1. SUMMARY: HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL FOUR-DAY VISIT BY KING FAISAL TO SYRIA CONCLUDED JANUARY 17. FINAL COMMUNIQUE ANNOUNCED THAT SAUDI ARABIA PROVIDING SARG \$350 MILLION IN ADDITION TO THAT ALREADY CONTRIBUTED UNDER RABAT PLEDGE. SYRIANS SEE VISIT AS TANGIBLE PROFF OF CONTINUED SOLIDARITY OF ARAB RANKS. END SUMMARY.

2. FINAL COMMUNIQUE:

A. CALLED FOR COMPLETE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM ALL OCCUPIED TERRITORY AND FOR SECURITY NATIONAL RIGHTS OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. STATED THAT ISRAELI REFUSAL TO

WITHDRAW, ITS ESCALATING ATTACKS, AND ITS THREATENING STATEMENTS ALL CONSTITUTE "SERIOUS THREAT TO PEACE IN AREA."

B. SAID RE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENTS THAT AGREEMENTS LERE SIMPLY FIRST STEP AND ARABS NEEDED TO CONTINUE TO SEEK FULL WITHDRAWAL AND PALESTINIAN RIGHTS.

C. EMPHASIZED NECESSITY OF IMPLEMENTING RABAT CONF. DECISIONS RE PLO AND REINFORCING PLO AS EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION.

D. EXPRESSED "EXTREME ANXIETY" OVER "REPEATED SAVAGE" ISRAELI ATTACKS AGAINST LEBANON AND CALLED FOR ASSISTANCE TO LEBANON.

3. ON BILATERAL SIDE MOST SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT WAS ANNOUNCEMENT OF SAUDI DECISION TO PROVIDE SARG \$350 MILLION. \$150 MILLION WAS OUTRIGHT GRANT FOR "PRESSING CONFIDENTIAL

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SYRIAN NEEDS" WHICH WERE NOT IDENTIFIED. REMAINING \$200 MILLION WAS LOAN FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. ZERO INTEREST RATE AS CUSTOMARY WITH SAG. SYRIANS AND SAUDIS ALSO AGREED TO STEP UP EXCHANGE OF OFFICIALS AT ALL LEVELS AND "HIGH RANKING" SAUDI DELEGATION IS TO COME TO SYRIA SOON TO WORK OUT DETAILS. SAUDIS, IN ADDITION, EXTENDED INVITATION FOR ASAD TO VISIT SAUDI ARABIA.

4. COMMENT: MINISTER OF ECONOMY TELLS US THAT THE SAUDI GRANT AID WAS UNEXPECTED. DESCRIBES BOTH LOAN AND GRANT AS COMPLETELY UNRESTRICTED; SPECIFICALLY, SAID THEY WERE NOT TIED TO MILITARY USE.

5. SYRIANS PLEASED WITH VISIT. AS WE HAVE REPORTED ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS, ONE OF SARG'S FUNDAMENTAL CONCERNS AT PRESENT IS THAT "FURTHER STEP-BY-STEP MOVES" (I.E. SINAI) WILL LEAVE SYRIA ISOLATED AND ISRAEL IN CONTROL OF GOLAN. FAISAL'S SUBSEQUENT STATEMENTS SUPPORTIVE OF SYRIAN DESIRE FOR PROGRESS ON ALL FRONTS INDICATE SARG'S POSITION FOUND SYMPATHETIC HEARING. FOR ASAD VISIT WAS PERSONAL BOOST VIS A VIS HIS PSREDOMINANTLY SUNNI (ORTHODOX) MOSLEM CITIZENRY BY IDENTIFYING HIM, THE ALAWITE, WITH THE ROYAL KEEPER OF ISLAM'S HOLY PLACES. ONCE AGAIN ASAD'S PRAGMATIC CULTIVATION IF ALL ARAB LEADERS HAS PAID OFF AND AT NO NOTICEABLE

COST TO HIS RELATIONS WITH THOSE "REVOLUTIONARY, SECULARIZING" ELEMENTS IN HIS OWN BAATHI CONSTITUENCY.
MURPHY

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